



Spera Speaks...

The Project Spera Quarterly Newsletter, Volume 3: Issue 2, April 2004

In This Issue...

- World Affairs Challenge™
- After-school Program Update
- Professional Development Program
- California World History Project
- Funding and Support
- “Worlds Apart—Common Voices” Partnership
- Interns and Volunteers
- Test Your Global Awareness!

Please contact us with questions or comments:

Project Spera, Inc.
999 Sutter Street 4th Fl.
San Francisco CA 94109
(415) 292-7421
info@projectspera.org

To find out more and to stay updated, visit
www.projectspera.org

If you wish to unsubscribe from our newsletters, please email info@projectspera.org

World Affairs Challenge™ A Success!

San Francisco's **Second Annual World Affairs Challenge** was held on March 27, 2004, on the campus of George Washington High School. The event was a tremendous success, bringing together teams from seventeen schools in Northern California and engaging 245 students. The theme for the 2004 Challenge was Human Rights and the Child.

The World Affairs Challenge is a unique academic competition on international affairs, which requires that students compete in four events: the Formal Presentation, the Global Awareness Quiz, the Collaborative Question and the Discovery Poster.

The Challenge drew 40 volunteers such as local government officials and representatives from non-profit organizations and local businesses to judge the competition; an additional 40 volunteers assisted with the operations of the event on the day of the Challenge.

The competition incorporates public speaking, dramatic presentation and group problem solving, and is designed to illustrate the relevance of academics to real world global problems. Student teams addressed a wide range of topics relating to the theme of Human Rights and the Child, including child prostitution, child labor, children and



The Franklin High School Challenge Team

homelessness, child soldiers and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We would like to acknowledge the generous support of the over 80 volunteers who spent their day with the students. In addition, we are very grateful for the use of George Washington High School for this event, and would like to thank Yvonne Chong, Assistant Vice Principal, and the teachers who graciously offered the use of their classrooms. It was an extraordinary day for the **245 students, 150 parents, and 85 volunteers** who participated in this exciting and inspiring international affairs competition.

We look forward to continued expansion next year!

What Participants Had To Say About The World Affairs Challenge...

"The WAC is great. You learn about important issues that face the world today. Along the way you meet new people, gain knowledge, and get to compete against other schools for a title. Whether or not you win, the experience is unforgettable."

-Rio Bauce, Willard Middle School, Berkeley



One of the Mercy High School Teams

"Participating in the World Affairs Challenge 2004 was one of the best things that I have ever done. ... I had so much fun in the whole preparation and process, and it was great working with my teammates and listening to their ideas. I have to say when I began this project, I actually looked forward to coming to school knowing I was going to another World Affairs Challenge Meeting.... I would definitely do this again, and I would recommend anyone and everyone to participate because everyone I know who did it had so much fun. There really is nothing to lose, in the end it doesn't matter if you came first, second, or third, it really is the experience that you will end up having that matters, and take it from someone who knows, that is the absolute truth."

- Farisha Jalam, O'Connell High School, San Francisco

"For me, the World Affairs Challenge was a great experience. This was the second year I have done it, and the people on our team are probably going to bring it to Berkeley High too.... Our team worked really well together, and I learned a ton. I would definitely do it again, especially if the topic is as interesting next year as this year."

- Naomi K. Wernham, Willard Middle School, Berkeley

"I really enjoyed the World Affairs Challenge because it offered more than what we would learn in school, and it offered it to anyone who wanted to participate. I learned more (and really knew it, not just memorized for a test or something) in the weeks preparing for the Challenge than I do on a regular basis at school. Most of what is done at school is to fill requirements, but with the WAC, everything had relevance and felt more important because I could really relate to it, and the WAC helped me realize that."

- Jannine Hanczarek, International Studies Academy, San Francisco

"The 2004 competition was not just a competition merely for prizes or trophies, but more so for awareness about international issues.... To know that your team is investigating an international problem makes this competition feel more like a life's work than a mere school project, makes the presentation and poster and collaborative question and quiz feel like a lasting impact that will surpass the boundaries of friendly competition and enter the realm of true solutions for an impossible evil like hunger or youth mistreatment.... Our team will continue to do this competition year after year, decade after decade, because its true purpose is not simply to test the abilities of an individual student, to assess the information crammed into ... memory just for competition's sake; this competition is meant to bring to light a problem, find its source, and create a means for compromising or removing that source to ensure present and future peace and prosperity. That is the powerful nature of this competition - its long-lasting impact on the people, the team, and the world around us."

- Brian Metzker, Franklin High School, Elk Grove

Global Citizenship After-school Program

Students participating in the Global Citizenship After-school Program at both sites, **YES in Oakland** and the **Beacon Center in San Francisco**, competed in the World Affairs Challenge.

Students at YES addressed the reasons why the United States and Somalia are the only two countries not to have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Beacon Center team examined the varied reasons for child homelessness worldwide and possible solutions to these issues. They examined case studies in San Francisco, Iraq, and North Korea and presented their research in the form of a newscast.

Both teams did an outstanding job preparing and competing, and we commend their hard work and commitment. Team members at YES included Javohn Hamilton, Jasmine Henshaw, Rithy Hang, Sequoia Turner, and Betty Bentley; the

Beacon Center team was comprised of Enrique Bachinelo, Emma Cervantes, Luis Martinez, Ulysses Cuadrado, and Sukhvinder Singh. Congratulations to both teams on an outstanding effort!

After the Challenge, students in the Beacon Center program began to design service projects locally. They will be visiting a youth center in mid-May to assist in the administration of after-school programs for younger students. The students have expressed interest in projects that examine the juvenile justice system and environmentalism, and service projects in these fields will be explored.

The After-school Program will continue next year at the existing sites, and Project Spera is currently considering expansion sites in San Francisco and the East Bay. Two additional sites will likely be added to the program offerings from September 2004.

We are currently in the process of identifying new partnerships under the Professional Development Program for the coming academic year. Project Spera has renewed agreements with our existing partner schools and will spend the remainder of the spring confirming expansion sites,

Funding and Support Update

Project Spera is pleased to report that we were recently awarded grants from the **New Initiatives Fund of the Rudolf Steiner Foundation** as well as the **Celebrity Fight Night Foundation**, courtesy of Al and Jan Ghelfi. Thank you for your support!

In addition, Diageo/Guinness USA and O'Reilly's generously contributed a portion of the proceeds from **O'Reilly's Fifth Annual Oyster and Beer Festival** on April 3, 2004 to Project Spera. We appreciate the financial support and extend our thanks to the more than 60 volunteers who volunteered on that day.

We would also like to recognize and thank the following generous donors who have contributed to Project Spera since our last newsletter:

Bialkin Family Foundation	Katherine Foster
Blaine Fogg	Kenneth Plevan
Bruce Goldner	Louis and Phebe Goodman
Debbie McBride	Nike Matching Gift Program
Don Harris	Peter P. Verbiscar-Brown
Donna Wagener	Scott Balkan
Francesco Barraï	Shahram Elghanayan
George Swanson and Christina Orth	Susan Banker
John Wm. Butler and John M. Vanderlinden	Thomas Kennedy

The following corporations and organizations provided in-kind donations to the **World Affairs Challenge** this year, including prizes, food, beverages, and giveaways for teachers:

AMC Theaters	Legion of Honor
American Conservatory Theater	Office Depot
Baja Fresh Mexican Grill	Pete's Coffee
Ben & Jerry's	Quizno's Subs
Berkeley Repertory Theatre	Rand McNally
Blockbuster	San Francisco Zoo
California Academy of Sciences	SF MOMA
California Shakespeare Theater	Stacey's Bookstore
City Lights Bookstore	The Cheeseboard
EGO Enterprises	The Gap Foundation
Exploratorium	Tony Roma's
Foreign Affairs	Trader Joe's
Kindel & Graham Inc.	Yerba Buena Ice Skating and Bowling Center
LaBelle Day Spa	

The World Affairs Challenge could not have been organized without the generous support of the **United Nations Foundation**, with guidance from Phil Giarrizzo Consulting. Special thanks to Phil Giarrizzo, Todd Stenhouse, and Nancy Mooney for their support and assistance. We would also like to recognize and thank the staff of the Center for Teaching International Relations (CTIR) at the University of Denver, especially Liz Beindorff and Mark Montgomery. CTIR administers the program and provides consistently sound advice and support for expansion sites.

Thank you for your support! Your investment will ensure that we continue to help California's students explore global issues and embrace an international perspective.

It is not too late to support this year's programs!
You can give online at www.projectspera.org.

Worlds Apart – Common Voices: An ITVS Partnership

Project Spera has partnered with Independent Television Services (ITVS) to promote the Worlds Apart -- Common Voices campaign. The campaign uses timely, groundbreaking public television programs to inspire cross-cultural dialogue and encourage long-term partnerships for lasting educational and social impact. Visit <http://itvs.org/outreach/worldsapartcommonvoices/> for more information and program listings about these videos that investigate the lives of refugees living in America.

Volunteers and Interns

We were incredibly fortunate to have the talent and dedication of six interns for the past several months.

Charmagne Campbell-Patton and **Marie Meslin** both joined Project Spera in the fall as development interns, and have since assisted in developing a sound model for the expansion of our development program. **Jan Wiginton** and **Jake Meyer** joined Project Spera as teaching assistants in January and have provided outstanding support in our partner school in Oakland, helping us teach in the classroom and design the curriculum. We'd also like to thank **Kate Spelman** and **Jesse Handsher** for their continued assistance with both administrative and Challenge-related work.

Ana Plasencia also devoted countless hours as the Research Assistant to teams preparing for the World Affairs Challenge. We are so very fortunate to have such an incredible group of people on our team!

We'd also like to thank the more than **150 volunteers** who gave their time to Project Spera either at the **World Affairs Challenge**, **O'Reilly's Oyster Festival**, or, in some cases, both events. We are inspired by your generosity and your energy! Thank you.

For upcoming opportunities to get involved or volunteer, please consult our website at www.projectspera.org.

Test Your Global Awareness!

Are you an informed global citizen? Try to answer the following questions, excerpted from a Global Awareness Quiz given to students participating in Project Spera's programs.

1. What percent of the world's population live in cities?
 - a. 25%
 - b. 50%